
Judiciary Committee

HB 1937

Title: An act relating to reimbursement by the state for juror expenses.

Brief Description: Increasing state funding for juror expenses.

Sponsors: Representatives Appleton, Flannigan and Ormsby; by request of Board For Judicial Administration.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Increases the pay for jurors from the current daily maximum rate of \$25 to \$65 until July 1, 2012.
- Requires an annual adjustment to the maximum daily rate for juror pay to be made by the Administrative Office of the Courts based on changes in the consumer price index beginning July 1, 2012.
- Requires the state to reimburse the county or city for juror pay for all days after the first day of attendance, provided that the county or city fulfill certain requirements and funding is available.

Hearing Date: 3/11/09

Staff: Kate White (786-5793) and Trudes Tango (786-7384)

Background:

The pay rate for jurors is set by state law. In Washington, jurors may receive up to \$25 but in no case less than \$10 for each day's attendance at jury service. Jurors also receive reimbursement for mileage at a rate prescribed by the Office of Financial Management. Local jurisdictions bear the cost of paying jurors, except for superior court cases involving incidents within correctional institutions, in which case the state reimburses the county for all jurors' fees.

In 2006, \$569,000 of the General Fund-State appropriation for fiscal year 2007 was provided for a juror pay pilot and research project. The legislation allowed jurors participating in the pilot

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project jurisdictions to receive juror fees of up to \$62 for each day of attendance in addition to mileage reimbursement. The pilot project jurisdictions included: (1) Clark County Superior and District courts; (2) Franklin County Superior and District courts and Pasco Municipal Court; and (3) Des Moines Municipal Court. The 2007 Legislature appropriated \$325,000 to continue the pilot project through October, 2007, and to fund the administration of subsequent surveys. A final report was released by the Washington State Center for Court Research on December 24, 2008.

Summary of Bill:

Counties are solely responsible for compensating jurors for their first day of attendance at a minimum daily rate of \$10 and a maximum daily rate of \$65 beginning July 1, 2010. The city is solely responsible for compensating jurors for the first day of attendance at a rate to be determined by the legislative authority of the city.

The state is responsible for reimbursing the county or city for juror pay, on a quarterly basis, for all days following the first day of attendance, and counties and cities are required to pay jurors for all days following the first day of attendance, at the following rate:

Date Range:	Minimum/Maximum Rates for Juror Pay:	State Reimbursement Rate:
Before July 1, 2010	\$10 - \$25	\$0
July 1, 2010 - July 1, 2011	\$20 - \$65	\$20
July 1, 2011 - July 1, 2012	\$40 - \$65	\$40
Beginning July 1, 2012	Annual adjustments based on consumer price index	\$65 with adjustments for inflation

If funds are not appropriated by the state for juror pay reimbursement, jurors must receive a minimum daily rate of \$10 and a maximum daily rate of \$25 for each day's attendance.

Jurors are still eligible to receive mileage reimbursement, as determined by the Office of Financial Management, in addition to the daily rate for each day of attendance.

To receive the new state reimbursement for juror pay, a county or city must: (1) implement specified juror policies regarding the length of jury terms; (2) comply with requirements regarding jury and juror management; (3) provide court administrators data regarding juror yield and utilization; and (4) use specified forms for any request of reimbursement.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.